



El Paso Museum of Art Collection of Retablos Exhibition

EL PASO, Texas – The El Paso Museum of Art (EPMA) invites the public to enjoy the exhibition *Joy and Suffering: EPMA’s Collection of Mexican Retablos* currently on view through May 12 in the Peter and Margaret de Wetter Galley.

Curated from the museum’s permanent collection of donations by the Hamilton, McKnight, and Roderick families, visitors will appreciate a new installation of EPMA’s *retablos* collection. *Retablos*, or small devotional paintings on tin and copper, will be complimented with the display of *ex-votos*, works commissioned to commemorate miracles, as well as *bultos*, or carved wooden sculptures.

Created in the 19th and 20th centuries, *retablos* were used at major pilgrimage sites in Mexico as well as homes and churches. Rural inhabitants of Mexico looked to untrained artists who utilized readily available materials like tin and copper to create modest but distinctive works.

The exhibition examines 50 *retablos* including images of the Virgin Mary in her many folk and formal manifestations, from the well-known Virgin de Guadalupe to the lesser-known Our Lady of Solitude.

“The exhibition showcases EPMA’s stellar collection, the second-largest collection of *retablos* in the United States. What is most compelling about the works is its significance to El Paso, Juarez, and the surrounding regions, particularly in regard to this region as an international point of passage with a multicultural community,” says EPMA Director Dr. Victoria Ramirez.

In addition, on April 6, EPMA will host an afternoon of lively art talks and curator-led tours illuminating the exhibition and the related and renowned collection of Spanish Colonial Art. Art Talks by Dr. Jorge Rivas Perez, Denver Art Museum Curator of Spanish Colonial Art, and Dr. Elizabeth Zarur, Assistant Professor of Art History, New Mexico State University, will be followed by tours of EPMA’s galleries and reception.

“When considered together, EPMA’s *retablos* offer a framework for understanding the joys and sufferings in 19th and 20th century Mexico and demonstrate the continued desire, despite a lack of means, for personal devotional imagery,” says EPMA Assistant Curator Kevin Burns.

The events are free and open to the public. To register and for more information, visit epma.art.

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